

4 June 2009

## Australia opens its doors at the 53rd Venice Biennale

**The Australian exhibits at the 53rd International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, will be officially launched today at the Australian Pavilion in Venice's Giardini della Biennale.**

Shaun Gladwell will present his captivating *MADDESTMAXIMVS* at the Australian Pavilion. The work is a compelling suite of five thematically interrelated videos with sculptural and photographic elements, influenced by outback Australian landscapes and the iconic *Mad Max* movies.

Also representing Australia at the Venice Biennale 2009 will be four early career artists in the *Once Removed* exhibition which will also be launched later in the afternoon at the Ludoteca in the Castello district of Venice. Curated by Felicity Fenner, *Once Removed* will feature a series of installations by Indigenous artist Vernon Ah Kee, Australian-based Japanese artist Ken Yonetani and collaborators Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro.

Thousands of international arts curators and critics are expected to flood the Australian Pavilion and the Ludoteca during the Vernissage (preview period) from 4 June to 7 June. Artists and organisers have worked around the clock to finalise preparations for the arrival of an expected 30,000 curators, collectors, gallery directors, artists and media from around the world. The Biennale runs from 7 June to 22 November 2009.

Doug Hall AM, commissioner for the Australian delegation at the Venice Biennale, said that congratulated the artists on creating an incredible showcase to represent Australia.

'Our congratulations go to Shaun and his team as well as Felicity and the *Once Removed* artists on presenting such challenging, diverse and compelling works that we are confident will invoke a strong positive response from international audiences,' Mr Hall said. 'The new face of Australian contemporary art will without a doubt make a big impression this year.'

The Australia Council for the Arts has managed and funded Australia's representation for more than 30 years. Past Australian representatives have included Sir Sydney Nolan (1954), Imants Tillers (1986), Arthur Boyd (1988), Judy Watson, Emily Kame Kngwarreye (1997), Howard Arkley (1999), Patricia Piccinini (2003), Ricky Swallow (2005), Susan Norrie, Daniel Von Sturmer and Callum Morton (2007).

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More information is available at [www.australiavenicebiennale.com.au/](http://www.australiavenicebiennale.com.au/)  
High resolution images are available at [www.australiavenicebiennale.com.au/media-centre-docs](http://www.australiavenicebiennale.com.au/media-centre-docs)

**Australia**  
Venice Biennale 2009

Australian Pavilion  
**Shaun Gladwell**

Ludoteca, Castello  
**Ken Yonetani**  
**Vernon Ah Kee**  
**Claire Healy &**  
**Sean Cordeiro**



**Australian Government**



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